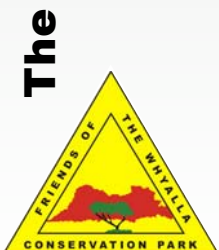




Newsletter of the
 Friends Of Whyalla Conservation Park
 PO Box 805 WHYALLA SA 5600
 Volunteers Working For Conservation

The Myall Post



June 2004



President's Message

By the time you get this newsletter, the first major new work in the park for the year 2004/2005 will have started. Earthmoving equipment will clear the western fence-line and the contractors will begin work on building a new fence during this week. This is being funded by money that our members have raised - principally through the Plant Sale.

This is a good start to our year and I hope that the momentum to get projects funded and underway will continue. We have a number of significant projects that we were unable to complete in 2003/2004 that will be tackled as funds become available. The need for volunteers to do work in the park will be a continuing one and I look forward to seeing you at working bees.

For the last two years, we have had a drought, which is both good and bad. Good because it has meant that fewer rabbits have survived and that has meant that as a group, we have had to do less rabbit control. Bad, because of its overall impact on the vegetation. We seem to be at a point where the weather systems are

changing and that we may have a wet spring. If this is the case, then there will be an upsurge in rabbit breeding and hence a need to control them. This time we will have improved technology on our side, as we will have a GPS to plot the positions of rabbit warrens.

One other hope that I have is that we will do more in the way of visiting other parks and places in our region. It is important that the group have some events where the aim is to enjoy ourselves and to experience the beauty of nature. There will be more about this in our next newsletter.

Clint Garrett

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This photo shows the western boundary to the new section of the Park. It has been cleared by Brambles, paving the way for the installation of a new fence along the western boundary.

Important Dates

Make sure that these dates are entered into your diary!

The calendar for the 2004/05 year will be set by the Committee next Thursday, but based on previous years some tentative dates might be:

Working Bee
Saturday 10th July @ 9:00am
Wild Dog Hill
(confirmed - see separate article)

Committee Meeting
Thursday 22nd July @ 7:30pm
267 Landrace Rd

Working Bee
Saturday 14th August @ 9:00am
Wild Dog Hill

A handy fridge-magnet calendar will be distributed with the next newsletter - be on the lookout!

Bin Roster

The following individuals or families have volunteered to empty the bins and check the Park on the weekends beginning:

Friday 2nd July –

Friday 9th July – volunteer required

Friday 16th July – Deans

Friday 23rd July – Garretts

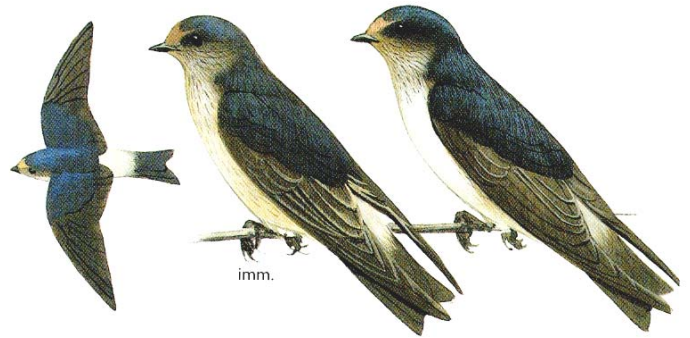
Friday 30th July – Nields

Friday August 7th – volunteer required

Please remember to wear clothing which will identify you as a Friends member and NPWS volunteer if at all possible. **Don't forget to look out for syringes!**

If you would like to volunteer for the roster, please call Denise Sharp on 8645-4442

Bird Of The Month



Field Guide to the Birds of Australia

Tree Martin

The common swallow-like bird we all see is the Welcome Swallow. In the warmer months in particular we may also see the Fairy Martin and the Tree Martin without realising they are not Welcome Swallows. The martins have square tails and white rumps which distinguish them from swallows.

The Tree Martin can be distinguished from the Fairy Martin by the colour of its head which is blue-black, whereas the Fairy Martin's is rust coloured. To see the difference can be difficult however if the bird is not flying close enough, low enough, or slow enough. They spend most of the day on the wing feeding on swarms of tiny insects, usually over tree tops or over water.

Common all over Australia they are migratory north/south according to the season, spending autumn and winter in the north, and spring and summer in the southern half of the continent, when they breed. Nesting in small holes, usually in trees, they line the hole with grass and leaves, and will modify the size of the hole with pellets of mud if it is too big. The clutch of 3 to 5 eggs are white lightly speckled with brown, and take approx.3 weeks to hatch. In autumn the flocks gather on telegraph wires and fence lines preparatory to flying north.

July Working Bee

Please meet at Wild Dog Hill at 9:00am on Saturday 10th July for the next Working Bee.

Some of the jobs that need to be completed this month are:

- Touching up the paint on the toilet, alterations to the door and minor repairs to the floor
- Finish the Park's sign inventory
- Water the young Myall's planted last month
- Inspect for weeds after the recent rains and spray if required
- Remove recently discovered Carrion Flower

Meeting Reports

2004 AGM

The 2004 AGM was held at Edward John Eyre High School Library on Saturday 19th June. Approximately 20 members and guests were present, as well as Ranger Stuart Beinke and guest speaker Brenton Arnold.

Brenton gave an extremely interesting presentation and spoke mostly about his early career with the National Parks & Wildlife Service. Brenton showed those present some spectacular slides of Lake Eyre when it was flooded during 1974.

The committee for 2004/05 was elected and consists of:

- **President** - Clint Garrett
- **Treasurer** - Lance Dean
- **Correspondence Secretary** - Denise Sharp
- **Minute Secretary** - Joan Nield
- **Publicity Officer** - David Poyner
- **Ordinary Members** - Ella Smith, John Carter, Bev Dunham

Committee Meeting

Two of the major issues discussed at the last two committee meetings have been:

- A draft agreement between Onesteel, DEH and the Friends group regarding a donation to the group from Onesteel which would allow them to fulfil Native Vegetation Act obligations. The initial funds would be used to construct the new western boundary fence.
- The group receiving funds from Landcare Australia as a direct result of donations by Onesteel employees to their Giving program. It was decided that it would be appropriate to build a trailhead at Wild Dog Hill. More information coming soon.

2004 Friends Forum

2004 Friends of Parks Forum 22nd, 23rd & 24th October Clare Valley

This year's forum will be hosted by the Friends of Spring Gully Conservation Park, Friends of Martindale Hall Conservation Park and Friends of Burra Parks.

There are four tours to choose from on Saturday afternoon, and an art exhibition and the conference dinner will be held at Quelltaler Winery at Watervale.

An information pack on the Forum (which includes a registration form) can be obtained from Denise Sharp.

2004 AGM

Presidents Message from the 2004 AGM

Here are some of the highlights of the 2003-2004 year for the Friends of the Whyalla Conservation Park.

- Life Membership for Pam and Alvin Charlesworth - in September we celebrated their 16 years of service to the group and the community.
- Our continuing Father's Day and Mother's Day Walks. These events provide the public with an introduction to the park and raise the group's profile.
- The Valentine's Day Film Night. This drew 50 people in spite of the high temperatures experienced during the day. We continue to get positive feedback from people who took time to that evening.
- Ella Smith's Birds of the Park newsletter items- in time she could turn these into a very useful book. Her knowledge of the local bird-life is significant and is of benefit to the group.
- The trip to Munyaroo Conservation Park in October, gave us the opportunity to see some beautiful country.
- Our two displays in Westland Shopping Centre increased our public profile
- The 2004 Plant Sale in March was highly successful as we managed to sell 1100 plants in just over 2 hours. The remainder were sold in the next few weeks and have given the group a profit of about \$2400.
- The KESAB Roadwatch Cleanup was pleasing in that we collected less rubbish this year than in past years from the 3.5 km of highway that borders the park.
- The increased number of members who have taken part in working bees and events has been a pleasing aspect of this last year.
- The removal of the 100 year old posts on the western boundary is the first stage of getting that fence replaced.

Our group was formed because of the amount of vandalism that was occurring at Wild Dog Hill in the mid 1980's. This year has seen a reduction in the amount of vandalism compared with 2003, but there has still been enough that our members have had to spend time and energy on repairing the damage done by vandals and less time on providing for our visitors and on pest control.

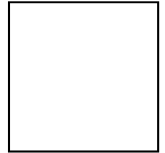
June of 2003 was a time when we were having one of our periodic upsurges in vandalism. Members had log barriers to replace and repair. We followed this up in July and August with branding all of the logs in the visitor area. Minor vandalism has continued throughout the year.

The drought has meant that rabbit numbers have not risen greatly and we have not had to do a great deal of control work. I wish I could say the same about Carrion flower. We have found another four locations for this pest in the park in the last year. Members have cut and swabbed most of the box-thorns in the North-eastern section of the park.

The removal of the old western boundary fence should mean that we will be able to have a new fence in place before the end of July.



Friends of the Whyalla
Conservation Park
PO Box 805
Whyalla SA 5600



Our July 2003 Planning Meeting set the following tasks for the year

- To improve the safety of the Lincoln Highway Entrance
- Provide improved visitor facilities at the main entry - a parking bay and new signage
- Improve the main access road - resurface and re-align in some places
- Prevent stock entry to the park by fencing the western boundary
- Upgrade the signage at Wild Dog Hill - new sign shelter near the visitor area
- Replace the existing plaques on the Walking trail
- Rip re-vegetation area to encourage seed deposition
- Continue weed and rabbit control

As you can see we have made some progress on this list, but there are still five tasks that we have yet to deal with

During the year DEH was reorganised yet again, but our Ranger Contact remains with Mambray Creek. In late March 2004, Stuart Beinke became the ranger in charge of the district. As a result of the staffing change, we farewelled Shirley Meyer in late April. We look forward to a long and productive relationship with Stuart.

The Friends group is able to function because we have the services of a good committee.

- **Ella Smith** - her work through the summer with the plants has contributed greatly to the success of the Plant Sale.
- **Denise Sharp** - is our secretary and has many contacts that are helpful for the work of the group. Denise has been our secretary for the last 7 years and not only looks after the organisation, but feeds and waters us as well.
- **Lance Dean** - has been our Treasurer for the last 11 years. He has seen to it that the group maintains a strong financial situation.
- **Joan Nield** has been our Minute Secretary- Joan is highly efficient at getting the minutes typed up and distributed.

- **John Carter** not only serves the community through the Friends group, but is also a Justice of the Peace and a member of the SES.
- **Paul Fennel** - joins our meetings as often as his shift work at the hospital allows.
- **David Poyner** - has been another ingredient in the success of our plant sale. His organisation of the ordering of the plants, getting soil and the labeling is appreciated, as is the help he gives Denise.
- **Hans Sipsma** - Was an enthusiastic new recruit to our committee, who has now moved to Western Australia. We wish Hans well and miss his presence on the committee.

I thank the members of the committee for their contributions.

Finally, I thank all of our members for the time that they have put in at Working bees and events. Your commitment to a better world is appreciated.

Clint Garrett
President 19th June 2004

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